CHAPTER IV

RÉSUMÉ
The preceding pages have tried to review the political fortunes of the Hoysala dynasty, the monuments sponsored and patronised by them and the iconographical data available with the temples of the period.

It is needless to repeat that art and architecture reached a high water mark during the times of the Hoysalas. This is reflected in the number of temples bespeaking the high level of architectural skill. Every temple of the Hoysala period is an art piece by itself because of its distinctive plan and the amazing wealth of sculpture. The latter, whether secular or religious, is marked by a plethora of ornamentation which sometimes becomes an obsession.

In spite of this, the icons and other sculptures have an individuality of their own. The detailed presentation of the various Brahmanical icons associated with the Hoysala temples brings out the fact that even though by and large, the sculptures followed the norms laid down by the canons in depicting the various gods and goddesses, there are certain deviations as well. This may be due to the change in certain icons in the then contemporary times which had received sanction by then, or due to the fact that these changes are not of a major magnitude, as in several cases,
they restrict themselves to the order of the attributes
held in his or her hand by an icon or to the position -
standing or otherwise - it was presented.

The details in respect of the icons in the preceding
chapter show that the icons mostly pertain to the range
available in Vaisnavism and Saivism. Compared to these,
there are few syncretistic icons like Harihara or
Hariharapitāmaha. As against this, that there was a shade
of Tantric influence is attested, though on a meagre scale,
by the icons which show affinity with the Kāpālikas.

As stated earlier, the icons depicted on Hoysala
temples fall in the normal channels of depiction of
Brahmanical icons. However, there are certain deviations
which deserve mention. For instance, the depiction of the
ten avatāras of Viṣṇu has neither been full nor uniform.
These are depicted only in some temples, and not necessarily
all the avatāras are depicted. The canonical norms in some
cases have been not scrupulously followed. For instance,
the depiction of the Matsya-avatāra and Kūmāravatāras does
not follow the norms laid down the Āgamas as mentioned by
Rao, and referred to in earlier pages. In the case of
Vāmana icons, the Hoysala artists have shown him in
Varadamudrā. Paraśurāma is shown holding a phala instead
of his hand being shown as sūchihasta. Kalkin is depicted
with two arms and also not riding a horse.
Similar has been the case with some of the icons of the Saiva pantheon. Talking simply in terms of the number of icons, it may be stated that the number of Saiva icons is only slightly more than those of Vaisnavism. But even here, some deviations can be seen. For instance, Bhairava with eight and ten arms is quite common in Hoysala temples. In the depiction of the Mahisasuramardini, she is shown with four, eight or fourteen arms, whereas the normal depiction has ten, eighteen or twenty hands. In respect of the Saptamatrikas also there are variations - Vaisnavi holds a fruit instead of a club.

In respect of syncretistic icons, it should be noted that these are very few. But the Hariharapitamaha icon is remarkable, as stated earlier, in respect of the hands and the emblems. Similar deviations can be noticed in respect of the icons of Brahma and Kārttikeya. The number of arms of Kārttikeya has been uniformly four in Hoysala temples. Balarama in several cases has not been shown with Nagahood canopy, whereas Virabhadra has been shown holding a vina. Similar deviations can be had in respect of the depictions of Manmatha and Ratī.

This study of the Brahmanical icons of the Hoysala times, specifically those associated with the temples of the period, has shown that icons were an integral part of
temple architecture. Secondly, that most of these icons are shown following the norms laid down by the Agamic texts. Deviations are no doubt there, but they appear to be marginal and not comprehensive. Thirdly, there was not much urge to depict syncretistic icons as one finds in the case of contemporary temples elsewhere in India. Lastly, the icons and the secular sculpture jointly integrate art and architecture. In effect, the icons on the external walls of the temple become to some extent a component of the decorative scheme. This added to the already over-decorated exteriors of Hoysala temples.